NOVA SCOTIA

NOUVELLE-ÉCOSSE

Nova Scotia Department of Natural Resources

French-language Services Plan 2012-2013

Report DNR 2012-002
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1 Message from the Deputy Minister

It is my pleasure, as Deputy Minister of the Department of Natural Resources, to provide you with the department's French-language Services Plan for 2012-13.

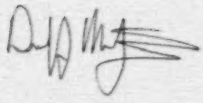
The department has broad responsibilities relative to the management of Nova Scotia's biodiversity, forest, geological, and park resources and the administration of the province's Crown land.

The approval and release of "The Path We Share, A Natural Resources Strategy for Nova Scotia 2011-2020" in August 2011 was the culmination of over four years of hard work dating back to the May 2007 announcement that a new strategy would be developed.

Our vision for natural resources, in 2020 and beyond, is one where:

- Nova Scotia is rich in natural resources - including biodiversity, forests, geological resources, and provincial parks.
- Individuals and groups interested in our natural resources work with the government to manage these resources wisely
- All Nova Scotians benefit from the natural health and wealth of the province.

Over the upcoming year, we will work to meet the commitments for French-language services we have identified in this year's plan. And we will report on what has been accomplished a year from now.



Mr. Duff Montgomerie
Deputy Minister, Natural Resources

2 Introduction / Context

The *French-language Services Act*, proclaimed in December 2004, and the French-language Services Regulations (effective December 31, 2006) provide the legislative framework covering the delivery of French-language services in the province. The required content for French-language services plans is laid out in the Regulations. The Act can be found at http://nslegislature.ca/legc/statutes/frenchla.htm while the Regulations can be found at http://www.gov.ns.ca/just/regulations/regs/flsregs.htm.

Another document that provides guidance to French-language services plans is the Nova Scotia Strategic Plan for French-language Services for 2009-2013 (available at www.pch.gc.ca/pgm/lo-ol/entente-agreement/services/ne-ns/09-13-mod-EntenteServices-N-E-eng.pdf). The strategic plan provides overall direction to government and its general objective is to support the development, delivery, and expansion of quality government services in French for Nova Scotia's Acadian and francophone community and to support initiatives which will enhance the vitality and assist with the development of the community.

The strategic plan identifies three specific objectives. These are:

Objective #1 - Framework and Policy. Strengthen the policy, regulatory, and administrative framework in support of the *French-language Services Act*.

Objective #2 - Enabling French-language Services. Consult, plan, develop, and deliver French-language services in priority areas.

Objective #3 - Community Development and Capacity Building. Support the Acadian and francophone community in its long-term development and sustainability.

Departmental information provided later in this plan is grouped using these three objectives.

3 Responses to French Requests

Senior department staff have been provided with information describing the circumstances when responses in French are required to meet the requirements of the French-language Services Regulations. Responses to all written correspondence in French received by the department are to be made in French.

4 French-language Services Inventory

A number of website pages, on-line reports and publications have been translated and are available now in French. This includes information on living with coyotes, implementing ecosystem-based integrated resource management in Nova Scotia, several of the more popular woodlot management course modules, the parks newsletter, the provincial parks campers guide, and information on the provincial wildlife park. French language services are provided for anyone who wishes to make a camping park reservation using the toll-free reservation phone line.

Results of a review of provincial government services provided in French conducted by the Fédération acadienne de la Nouvelle-Écosse in the summer of 2011 showed that the department's website contained just over 14% of the provincial government's website pages provided in French. At that time there were 294 pages available in French, the second highest number of all departments.

5 Progress for Reaching Goals and Objectives for 2011-12

5.1 Corporate Objective #1 - Framework and Policy

The objective was to strengthen the policy, regulatory, and administrative framework in support of the *French-language Services Act*.

Corporate Objective 1.2 - Institutional Responsibilities

The expected result was that designated public institutions better fulfill their obligations pursuant to the *French-language Services Act* and its regulations. Department objectives for 2011-12 included:

- providing support for relevant initiatives of the Office of Acadian Affairs.

Planned measures for 2011-12 included:

- providing departmental information for the annual progress report on French-language services.
- promoting, within the department, relevant Office of Acadian Affairs initiatives and projects.

Progress in reaching goals and objectives for 2011-12 included:

- providing information on the department's achievements in French-language services during 2010-11 to the Office of Acadian Affairs for use in the preparation of government's 2011 annual progress report on French-language services.
- distributing information on scheduled Acadie at a Glance workshops and the registration procedure to be followed to staff.

5.2 Corporate Objective #2 - Enabling French-language Services

The objective was to consult, plan, develop, and deliver French-language services in priority areas.

Corporate Objective 2.1 - Consultations

The expected result was that designated public institutions deliver services that better respond to the priority needs of the Acadian and francophone community as identified through consultation. Department objectives for 2011-12 included:

- providing appropriate opportunities for consultation.

Planned measures for 2011-12 included:

- providing French-language services, as appropriate, for any province wide consultations taking place.

Progress in reaching goals and objectives for 2011-12 included:

- providing a French version of a discussion paper on community lands trusts for use in focused discussions on a draft *Community Easements Act*.

Corporate Objective 2.3 - Communications with the Public

The expected result was that key stakeholders and the community would better understand the approach being taken by the government to provide French-language services and they are more aware of the programs and services available to them. Department objectives for 2011-12 included:

- making it easier for clients to access information and services in French.

Planned measures for 2011-12 included:

- undertaking website enhancements to make it easier for clients to locate information that is provided in French.

Progress in reaching goals and objectives for 2011-12 included:

- providing parks information in the French Doers and Dreamer Guide.
- website enhancements have been deferred to 2012-13.

Corporate Objective 2.4 - Service Delivery

The expected result was that services in French considered as priorities were identified, strategies or approaches for service delivery were implemented, and services were offered. Department objectives for 2011-12 included:

- increasing the amount of information available in French.

Planned measures for 2011-12 included:

- continuing with the translation of material into French for distribution and posting on the department's website.

Progress in reaching goals and objectives for 2011-12 included:

- providing material in French on coyote safety and on provincial parks.
- preparing educational material for use at the Natural Resources Education Centre in 2012-13.

Corporate Objective 2.5 - Human Resources

The expected result was that the capacity of the Public Service to provide services in French had increased. Department objectives for 2011-12 included:

- working with the Office of Acadian Affairs to provide opportunities for staff to access French-language training.

Planned measures for 2011-12 included:

- distributing information on upcoming training to staff.

Progress in reaching goals and objectives for 2011-12 included:

- training taken by 12 staff, with a total of 26 courses completed by these staff.

6 Goals, Objectives, and Measures for 2012-13

6.1 Corporate Objective #1 - Framework and Policy

The objective is to strengthen the policy, regulatory, and administrative framework in support of the *French-language Services Act*.

Corporate Objective 1.2 - Institutional Responsibilities

The expected result is that designated public institutions better fulfill their obligations pursuant to the *French-language Services Act* and its regulations. Department objectives for 2012-13 include:

- providing support for relevant initiatives of the Office of Acadian Affairs.

Planned measures for 2012-13 will include:

- regular representation on the French-language Services Coordinating Committee.
- providing departmental information for the annual progress report on French-language services.
- promoting, within the department, relevant Office of Acadian Affairs initiatives and projects.
- developing an information package for use in the department to explain and promote departmental responsibilities under the *French-language Services Act*.

6.2 Corporate Objective #2 - Enabling French-language Services

The objective is to consult, plan, develop, and deliver French-language services in priority areas.

Corporate Objective 2.1 - Consultations

The expected result is that designated public institutions deliver services that better respond to the priority needs of the Acadian and francophone community as identified through consultation. Department objectives for 2012-13 include:

- providing appropriate opportunities for consultation as the department proceeds with the implementation the natural resources strategy .

Planned measures for 2012-13 will include:

- raising awareness within the department of the need to include a means of collecting feedback from the Acadian and francophone community during any province wide consultations undertaken during the year.

Corporate Objective 2.2 - Internal Communications

The expected result is that public service employees are more knowledgeable about the approach being taken by the government to provide French-language services. They are more sensitive to cultural issues pertaining to the Acadian and francophone community and more aware of the requirements to communicate in French; they promote services in French to the public. Department objectives for 2012-13 include:

- improving the capacity of the department to deliver services in French.

Planned measures for 2012-13 will include:

- preparing a list of department staff who would be available to, on an as needed basis, assist French speaking clients.
- developing resource material, and providing it to staff, that will help to raise awareness among staff of the desirability of making additional services available in French.

Corporate Objective 2.3 - Communications with the Public

The expected result is that key stakeholders and the community better understand the approach being taken by the government to provide French-language services and they are more aware of the programs and services available to them. Department objectives for 2012-13 include:

- making it easier for clients to access information and services in French.

Planned measures for 2012-13 will include:

- undertaking website enhancements to make it easier for clients to locate information that is provided in French.

Corporate Objective 2.4 - Service Delivery

The expected result is that services in French considered as priorities are identified, strategies or approaches for service delivery are implemented, and services are offered. Department objectives for 2012-13 include:

- increasing the amount of information available in French.

Planned measures for 2012-13 will include:

- reviewing existing website content to identify additional information that would be desirable to have available in French, and working with the Office of Acadian Affairs to have the information translated.
- promoting the translation of new material developed during the year.

Corporate Objective 2.5 - Human Resources

The expected result is that the capacity of the Public Service to provide services in French has increased. Department objectives for 2012-13 include:

- working with the Office of Acadian Affairs to provide opportunities for staff to access French-language training.

Planned measures for 2012-13 will include:

- distributing information on upcoming training to staff.

6.3 Corporate Objective #3 - Community Development and Capacity Building

The objective is to support the Acadian and francophone community in its long-term development and sustainability.

Corporate Objective 3.1 - Preservation and Growth of the Community

The expected result is that government has helped Acadian and francophone community organizations realize objectives expressed in the community's Comprehensive Development Plan 2009-2014. Department objectives for 2012-13 include:

- engaging the Acadian and francophone community in consultations on the provincial park system.

Planned measures for 2012-13 will include:

- undertaking a park system review to create a provincial park system that is sustainable over the long-term and reflects public values.

7 Priorities of the Acadian and Francophone Community

A review of the Fédération acadienne de la Nouvelle-Écosse's Comprehensive Development Plan 2009-2014 found that there were not specific objectives related to the department's mandate of natural resources management and Crown lands administration. There were a number of generic objectives that are common to all departments. The department will be working to support several of these by carrying out the measures provided in the previous section.

If other Acadian and francophone community priorities, specific to the department, are identified during the year, they will be reviewed and appropriate responses will be developed.

8 Conclusion: Contribution to the Preservation and Growth of the Acadian and Francophone Community

The department's focus will be on two areas. First, the department will continue to make information that may be of interest to the community available. Second, the department will work to improve its overall ability, and the ability of staff, to interact with the Acadian and francophone community.